

Black Publication, Third World Accent

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"Because the problems of blacks reflect the whole panorama of our human needs in microcosm, the black struggle is related to the natural aspirations of society as a whole..."

Ida Lewis, Encore publisher

By Angela Terrell

A new magazine—Encore—will appear Tuesday on national newsstands.

It is different from other magazines because it is published by a black woman, it is an international news magazine for the black community, and it includes viewpoints of other ethnic groups, or what is more and more being called the "Third World."

Encore resembles New York magazine, Newsweek and Time, but without imitating any of them. It covers the news as seen from a black and "Third World" point of view. Executive editor Owen Wilkerson says that while Third World groups don't agree on many things, they almost all "agree that news from our perspective is not being covered by the white press."

"We (blacks) don't want to be parochial and provincial in our thinking," says publisher Ida Lewis. "The urban black community is fed up with dogma, slogans and information primarily suited to someone else. Encore will provide a mechanism for the black adult to come face-to-face with the people and events that affect him."

Adds Nikki Giovanni, black poet and Encore editorial consultant, "So often when you say, 'This is a

black magazine,' people think you're only going to talk about what they think are 'black issues.' But our world doesn't stop in Harlem or Watts. If the (British) pound drops (in value), it has a lot to do with our (blacks) rent and the kind of meat we buy in the supermarket that week."

Tuesday's premiere has many groups speaking out. "America: Neither Black nor White?" provides viewpoints by Orde Coombs, a black writer; Felipe Luciano, founder of the Young Lords—a group of activist Puerto Rican youths; presidential aspirant Sen. George McGovern (D-S.D.); Chicano activists Roberto Quiroz and Alejandro Garcia, and Rolling Thunder, a Shoshone Indians legal adviser.

They show, says Encore publisher Lewis, "that the quest for social justice can no longer be viewed in black and white terms. Yet the issues remain the same, uniting all those engaged in the larger struggle."

There's also a conversation between poet Giovanni and Russian poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko, viewpoints of Rep. Ronald Dellums, (D-Calif.), Rep. Shirley Chisholm (D-N.Y.), and actor Paul Robeson. There are reports on new developments in art, theater, dining, film, fashions, business and sports. Upcoming issues promise an interview with George Wallace and stories on "Will the real white man stand up?"

Encore began as an idea just five months ago, and its final appearance, publisher Lewis said, has depended much on her ability to surround herself with profes-

sionals and "love." The publisher was former editor-in-chief of Essence Magazine and has written for Jeune Afrique, Life, L'Express.

"A lot of the work done on this magazine was out of love and a desire to see a black magazine like this succeed," she explained in her New York office at 58th and Madison Avenue. "There hasn't been enough money

to pay for all of the services we've received."

Encore is financed by "about 20 of my friends," she said. "I want this to be a black magazine—meaning black-supported. I've been very cautious about who invests in Encore. I want the magazine to be a real part of the community."

"I will only accept white investors whose involvement means growth for the black community," she said. She estimates the cost of getting started and putting the first issue together at \$40,000.

"I'm also being very selective about writers who are involved with Encore," said Lewis. "I've tried to handle everything with Encore as though I were picking a mate."

Besides Nikki Giovanni and Owen Wilkerson, a former writer for the Newark News, the 22-member staff includes Ellis Haizlip, producer of the black variety television show, SOUL!, as communications editor. There are 21 contributing writers in the first issue and correspondents in Washington, Boston, Atlanta, and internationally in Ghana, India, Ivory Coast, Senegal, East Africa, Nigeria and Paris.

Historically, black publications have been the only complete source of information for and on the black American's way of life. Since World War II, when John Johnson started publishing Ebony, black magazines flourished and then floundered. For about 20 years, Johnson Publications had a monopoly on long running black magazines.

Since 1968, however, the market for black publications increased rapidly. The civil rights movement of the early '60s and the urban rebellions between 1965 and 1968 made blacks aware of the sometimes superficial coverage given black communities by the dominantly white media. The writer "with a black perspective" came into his own and magazines sprang up around the country to provide him an outlet.

Some, like Essence, the first regularly published national magazine for black women, grew. Essence went from a circulation of zero in 1970 to 171,000 for its second anniversary issue next month.

While many old standbys in the white publishing field are hurting and searching for new directions, black publishers are sprouting like flowers in May. The growth is in spite of a slack economy, rising costs (spiraling postal rates are proving near-fatal to publications with large dependency on mail subscriptions), and high unemployment among blacks.

Some black publications haven't survived because of

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